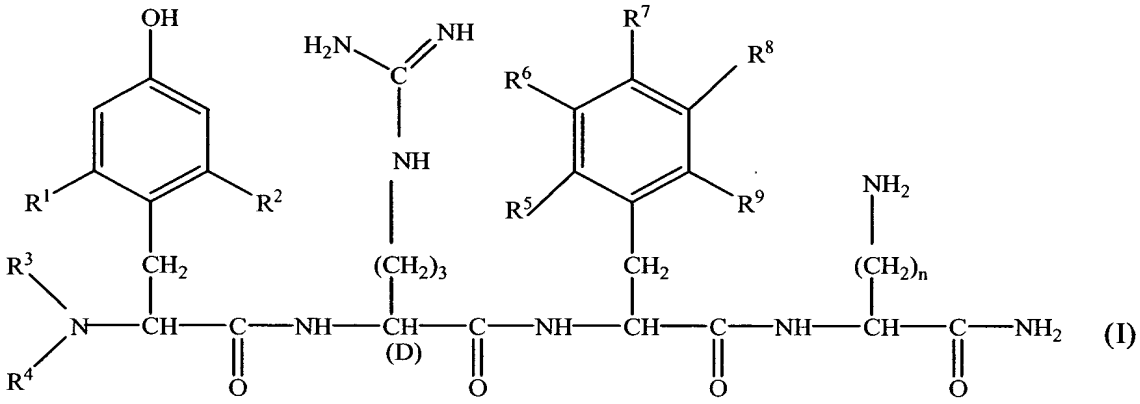
Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 5-10, 13 and 14 without prejudice. Please amend claims 1, 4, 11, 12, 15, and 16 and add new claims 17 and 18 as set forth below in the List of Claims.

List of Claims

1. (Currently amended A compound of ~~the~~ formula I:



(I)

wherein

R^1 is selected from

(i) a linear or branched C_1-C_6 alkyl;

(ii) a C_1-C_6 alkoxy;

R^2 is selected from

(i) hydrogen;

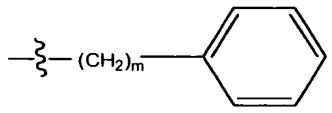
(ii) a linear or branched C_1-C_6 alkyl;

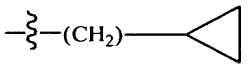
(iii) a C_1-C_6 alkoxy;

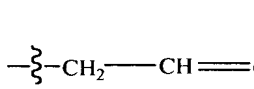
R^3 and R^4 is each and independently selected from

(i) hydrogen;

(ii) a linear or branched C_1-C_6 alkyl;

(iii)  wherein m = 1-3;

(iv)  ; and

(v)  ;

R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8 and R^9 is each and independently selected from

(i) hydrogen;

(ii) a halogen, ~~where "halogen" encompasses~~ wherein said halogen is selected from the group consisting of: chloro, fluoro, bromo and iodo; and

(iii) a linear or branched C_1-C_6 alkyl; and

n is an integer of from 1 to 5;

as well as pharmaceutically and pharmacologically acceptable salts thereof.

2. (Original) A compound of formula I according to claim 1, wherein

R^1 is a linear C_1-C_6 alkyl;

R^2 is a linear C_1-C_6 alkyl or hydrogen;

R^3 and R^4 is each and independently selected from a straight C_1-C_6 alkyl or hydrogen;

R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8 and R^9 is each and independently selected from

(i) hydrogen;

(ii) halogen, where "halogen" encompasses chloro, fluoro, bromo and iodo;

(iii) linear or branched C_1-C_6 alkyl; and

n is an integer of from 1 to 5.

3. (Original) A compound according to claim 1, wherein

R^1 is CH_3;

R^2 is hydrogen or CH_3;

R^3 and R^4 are both hydrogen; and

R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8 and R^9 are all hydrogen; and

n is 4.

4. (Currently amended) A compound according to claim 1, ~~which~~ wherein said compound is selected from ~~anyone~~ the group consisting of:
H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe-Lys-NH_2;
H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe-Orn-NH_2;
H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe-A_2Bu-NH_2;
H-Mmt-D-Arg-Phe-Lys-NH_2;
H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe(p-F)-Lys-NH_2; and
Dmt(NMe)-D-Arg-Phe-Lys-NH_2.

5-10. Cancelled

11. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound ~~of the formula I~~ according to claim 1 as an active ingredient, in admixture with one or more ~~pharmacologically and~~ pharmaceutically acceptable carriers.

12. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The pharmaceutical composition ~~according to~~ of claim 11, wherein said pharmaceutical composition is suitable for administration intrathecally, epidurally, intramuscularly, and intravenously.

13. Cancelled

14. Cancelled

15. (Currently amended) A method ~~for the treatment of a subject~~ of treating a patient suffering from pain, ~~whereby an effective amount of~~ comprising administering to said patient a compound ~~of the formula I of claim 1,is administered to a patient in need of pain relief~~ according to claim 1 for a time and under conditions effective to induce analgesia.

16. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The method ~~for~~ of treatment ~~according to~~ of claim 15, wherein ~~the~~ said pain is labor pain.

17. (New) A salt of a compound according to claim 1 selected from the group consisting of: a hydrochloride, an acetate, or a trifluoroacetate salt.

18. (New) A process for preparing a compound of formula I according to claim 1, comprising:

a) preparing a peptide attached to a solid phase support;

b) coupling a protected amino acid to said peptide in an inert solvent using a coupling agent;

c) completing the synthesis; and

d) isolating the compound of formula I.